

ALLEGED PLOT TO ROB AND MURDER.

The Clerk of Dr. Hecht, an East Side Druggist, Held on Suspicion.

He Was Found by the Druggist in the Cellar with Two Strange Companions.

Black Masks and Murderous Weapons Were Afterward Discovered Ready for Use.

DR. HECHT CLAIMS SECOND SIGHT.

He Says That Once in a Vision He Saw His Clerk Steal, and That a Strange Premonition Disclosed the Latest Plot Against His Life.

George Hecht, a druggist, who has a shop at Clinton and Rivington streets, believes that he has the gift of "second sight," and that his gift has saved him from a violent death at the hands of George Meister, his clerk, the sixteen-year-old, and, as he claims, degenerate son of honest parents.

Dr. Hecht, known as the "Herr Doctor" in the neighborhood, where his drugs are in high repute, is much like the famous Doctor Sangrado in "Gli Blas." He waits upon customers in a flowered bathrobe, suggestive of the robes of medieval astrologers. A peaked cap, or a skull cap, would complete his makeup as a seer. In the room back of his shop he has a piano. When the chemist shop is closed, he can hear the proprietor playing Raff concertos and strange melodies, the like of which are not familiar in Clinton and Rivington streets.

THE DOCTOR'S HORDE.
In the back room there is a gas stove, where the doctor cooks his modest meals, and a leather sofa, whereon he sleeps. There is a mahogany escritoire of fabulous age, in the top drawer of which he keeps money. There is also a chemical closet, where he keeps more money, as well as chemicals and the mixtures that effect the wonderful cures. People thereabouts have believed that the doctor kept a great deal of money about the back room.

One of the banes of the doctor's otherwise peaceful existence has been hired boys. He has had stupid ones without end, and has discharged boy after boy because he did not suit. Two weeks ago, in answer to an advertisement, he employed George Meister, son of Charles Meister, a carpenter, who is also the janitor of the flat at No. 300 East Eighteenth street. The doctor saw the lad's parents and was so favorably impressed by them that he engaged the boy, though he did not like his appearance.

IN THE BOY'S POCKET.
But George Meister proved to be the best boy the doctor had ever had. He seemed by intuition to anticipate the doctor's slightest wish. Still, the doctor did not like him.

A week ago the doctor was playing a nocturne on his piano. He closed his eyes dreamily as he played, and, so he says, saw the boy take a bottle of valuable medicine and put it in his overcoat pocket. It was as distinct as if he had in reality seen the act. He sent the boy down cellar upon some pretext and went to his overcoat, in the pocket of which, he says, he found a bottle of valuable medicine.

"I did not discharge him then," said the doctor, yesterday. "He was so useful; I only wanted him that I would do so if I caught him stealing again. By that leniency I believe I ran the chance of being murdered."

"Last Wednesday morning I felt that some evil was about to befall me, though I could not tell what it was. George was unusually active about the store. He was certainly worth half a dozen boys that morning. He cleaned the store up until it looked as neat as a hospital. He dusted the bottles with more care than I expected even of him, and only remained out a little while for lunch. He was very silent about it all, and, I presume, was thinking of what he was going to do. When he came back from lunch I felt with absolute certainty that I was in danger, but I couldn't tell what it was. The boy took up some cans and other things that belonged in the cellar and started down the cellar stairs. I followed him. In the dim light at the foot of the stairs I saw two men or boys with Meister. He started at being caught, but quickly recovered his presence of mind and said to them: 'If you want to find those gas meters you had better go upstairs and see the janitor.'"

THE DOCTOR'S INTUITION.
"I immediately said: 'George, you are lying. Those men are with you. They don't want any gas meters. I want all three of you to come upstairs with me.' I stood on the stairs above them, and they could not attack me easily in that position, so they followed me up the stairs and into the back room. The strangers were each about nineteen or twenty years of age, and bigger than my boy. I sent George to the Eldridge Street Station for a policeman, and questioned his companions. They gave the names of Frank Burke, of No. 291 East Twenty-fifth street, and Charles Frankel, of No. 338 East Twenty-second street. They said that they had come to the store to see Meister, and denied that they intended to steal. That didn't agree with Meister's statement that he didn't know them, and that they wanted to see the meters. When Meister came back and said there was no policeman in the station house that could be sent to my place, I went to the door and called in one who was passing."

"It was then, I suppose, that they concealed the weapons which were afterwards found. The policeman and I questioned them, and I made a search and found that nothing was missing, so I decided not to make a misting. I let them go and discharged Meister. He was very cool about it, and went away quickly without saying anything. When they were gone I noticed that the music on top of my piano was disarranged. I looked it over, and between the leaves I found a piece of inch-and-a-half lead pipe nearly two feet long. Then I was sorry that I had let them go. On Thursday I looked behind a black handbag on the piano and found another piece of pipe just like it. A new boy that I employed found two black masks such as robbers wear in one of my coal scuttles. He also found a note printed with ink which said: 'Closed. Will open at 4 p. m. G. Hecht.' It had been torn in two, one-half



DRUGGIST GEORGE HECHT

SCENES AND CHARACTERS THAT FIGURE IN AN ALLEGED PLOT TO KILL AND ROB DRUGGIST HECHT.

Dr. George Hecht, a well-known druggist on the East Side, had in his employ until last Wednesday a young man named George Meister. On that day he found his clerk and two strange men in the cellar of his store. They told conflicting stories. After their departure masks and murderous weapons were discovered, indicating a plot to kill and rob the druggist. A sign announcing the temporary closing of the drug store was found, which, it is believed, the men intended to place on the front door while they were engaged in committing the crime. The clerk is under arrest. Druggist Hecht attributes his escape to a power of second sight.

being thrown in each one of my coal scuttles. It was 2 o'clock when I discovered the men in the cellar. I believe they had intended to lock me up and put it on the door after killing me."

THE POLICE INFORMED.

This story of the doctor's was told to the police on Thursday, and Detectives Krauch and Stringer were assigned to the case. They learned that Meister did not go home on the night of his discharge. He has a married brother, Charles Meister, a glazier, who lives at No. 31 Attorney street, and late on Thursday they arrested Meister near his brother's home. The youth stoutly maintained his innocence and denied that he knew the two other alleged would-be robbers and murderers for whom the detectives are still looking. Meister was arraigned before Magistrate Braun in the Essex Market Court, and remanded to Police Headquarters, where he awaits the arrest of the other two. The names and addresses they gave the doctor are found to be fictitious.

The parents of Meister know nothing of his associates nor have they ever noticed any criminal tendencies in the boy. His next older brother, Frank, who is twenty-one years old, was once found guilty of theft and served a term in the Elmira Reformatory. He now lives in a boarding-house in Ludlow street, and the parents have nothing to do with him. The older brother, Charles, is honest. Before going to work for the doctor George told his parents that he was working for P. C. Bank, a plumber, of No. 43 Third avenue. The plumber knows nothing of him. Before that he worked for W. Mayerhofer, a druggist, at Eleventh street and First avenue, for a year and seven months, and while there was never caught in any dishonesty. He attended the East Fifth street evening school and was regarded as an unusually bright boy who progressed rapidly in all of his studies. Good Mrs. Meister is heartbroken over the disgrace of her youngest son following so close upon the wrongdoing of her second child.

"If he has done wrong," she said between sobs, "he must suffer for it. God only knows where he got evil tendencies. It ain't in the family."

HONEYMOON ENDS IN JAIL.

A Newly-Married Postal Clerk Borrowed Government Funds.

Boston, March 21.—The honeymoon of John G. Kahoe, a clerk in the Jamaica Plain Post Office, came to an abrupt end yesterday afternoon. He was arrested on the charge of stealing \$47 from the stamp drawer in the office.

Kahoe was married last Tuesday, and with his bride started on a trip to New York. For the past three days they have been visiting the sights of the metropolis, and during that time the shortage was discovered. Postmaster Coveney was notified and Inspector Snow was detailed on the case. When he appeared at Kahoe's house and arrested him, the young bride became nearly frantic with grief. She begged the Inspector to lock her up too, and it was with considerable difficulty that the prisoner was taken from his wife's side. Kahoe was held in \$15,000 for his appearance at the United States Circuit Court, and in default of bail was taken to Charles Street Jail. He is about twenty-one years of age, and entered the service as a special messenger boy. He explained to the officers that he did not intend to steal the money, but viewed the matter simply as a loan.

MANY MAD WOMEN MAY BE SET FREE.

Sixteen of Them Transferred from Bellevue to the Ward's Island Asylum.

Temporarily Received, but They May Yet Be Turned Loose as O'Donohue Was.

POLICE AND GUARDS ON THE ALERT.

Commissioners of Charities Determined Not to Accept a Return of the Patients—A Question of Authority Courts Must Decide.

Sixteen lunatic women were sent from Bellevue Hospital to the Manhattan State Hospital for the Insane on Ward's Island, yesterday morning, and though they were received, the authorities at Bellevue on the alert all yesterday afternoon and last night to prevent their return, as the insane man, John P. O'Donohue, was, Friday night. The guards at the gate of Bellevue were largely reinforced, and a squad of policemen were kept on hand to prevent any flank movement of the Ward's Island people. The women would probably have been turned loose in the city if they had been sent back from Ward's Island, just as O'Donohue was.

John P. O'Donohue, whose mania is admitted by all to be of a mild and harmless form, was selected as a scapegoat on which to try the differences between the Commissioners of Charities and the managers of the State Hospital on Ward's Island. Backed by the State Commissioners of Lunacy, the island authorities refused to receive insane patients from Bellevue unless they were supplied with new suits of clothes. A test case was tried in the Supreme Court, and Justice MacLean decided that so long as the clothing was clean and properly disinfected it need not be new.

In accordance with this order, O'Donohue was taken to Ward's Island and left in charge of Dr. Mary. Superintendent MacDonald, however, sent him back to Bellevue, as the Journal published yesterday. He was pushed through the door and left there by the Ward's Island attendants, but Commissioner O'Brien and the Bellevue management turned him loose, and the insane man walked out into the streets, absolutely free.

On all topics but that of religion O'Donohue is sane, but he thinks that he is Adam, and attributes his comparative poverty to the loss of Eve, who was his main support before she was drowned in the flood. When O'Donohue found himself free on Friday night he went straight to his home at No. 5 Eleventh street, Hoboken, awakening his aged mother, with whom he lives, just as she was going to bed. Yesterday he said he was a printer by trade, but could get no work because

he had been unjustly adjudged insane. He stuck to his story about being Adam, and said it could be proved by the mark on his foot where he trod upon the serpent.

SIXTEEN WOMEN SENT AWAY.

The authorities at Bellevue determined early yesterday morning to continue to relieve the congested insane wards of the hospital by shipping another batch of lunatics to Ward's Island. Soon after 9 o'clock sixteen mad women, each in charge of a keeper and Dr. F. F. Russell, were embarked aboard the hospital boat Thomas S. Brennan and landed on the dock at Ward's Island. In the absence of Superintendent MacDonald they were received and duly signed for, as in the case of O'Donohue, by Dr. Emmet C. Dent. Then the Bellevue people went back and prepared for a sleep. They were backed by the Commissioners and the Corporation Counsel.

If the lunatics should be brought back the Bellevue authorities were determined not to admit them. At such times as boats were expected to land from the island the doors of the hospital were barred, and the entire staff of keepers were lined up, ready to resist the return of their late charges. Such was the situation up to a late hour last night.

Telegrams were dispatched to Albany by the Ward's Island authorities, and orders were received from the State Commissioners of Lunacy to receive the patients. The dispatch was:

"Albany, March 21.—Notify the Commissioners of Charities that the patients will not be admitted to the Manhattan State Hospital, but the hospital managers will endeavor to protect the interests of the city of New York by giving the women temporary shelter in some building, at the expense of the city, to be held subject to the orders of the city authorities, until such time as they comply with the order of the president of the State Commission, and furnish new clothing."

BELLEVUE TOO CROWDED.
Corporation Counsel Scott said yesterday: "An appeal against Justice MacLean's ruling may act as a stay, but that merely relieves the State Hospital authorities from incurring risk of contempt of court by refusing to receive O'Donohue. The managers of the State Hospital were anxious to have the charge of the insane, and they have taken all the room from us. We

are always very willing to look after our insane, if they will only let us have room for them. The wards at Bellevue, however, are now so full that they cannot be healthy, and are really threatening to become positively dangerous. The rule as to new clothing has never been enforced at Brooklyn, Middletown or Poughkeepsie. Dr. MacDonald ought to have been removed years ago. I have frequently told this to the Commissioners."

"O'Donohue is a harmless lunatic, and he was therefore selected for the purpose for which he was used. But under any circumstances I hold that the responsibility rests with the State Hospital, for when they once received him, the Bellevue people clearly had no further hold on him."

SHUTTERED IN A BOATHOUSE.
The sixteen women who were taken to Ward's Island were kept for several hours in a cold boathouse, but later in the day were given better shelter. Acting under orders from the Manhattan State Hospital authorities, the captain of the ferryboat Brennan refused to take newspaper men to the island, but last night a visit was made to the place by means of a rowboat.

Dr. Roe, who was in charge of the female wards, said:

"These women are here and under shelter. I will not tell you where they are now and what is to be done with them. They have not been ill-treated. We have been trying to catch Dr. MacDonald by telephone, but can't. You cannot see Dr. Dent and I will not answer any more questions."

CRAZED BY FEAR OF FIRE.
Occupants of a Passaic Tenement Saved with Great Difficulty.

Fire, evidently of incendiary origin, broke out at about 3 o'clock yesterday morning in a tenement at Passaic, N. J., owned by Jacob Kasternack. By a lucky chance Policeman Flynn, the only policeman on duty all night in that city, saw the fire in time to save the occupants, who numbered nearly one hundred.

The danger to which they were suddenly awakened appeared to deprive them of reason, and it was with the greatest difficulty that some of them were got out alive.

HE READ POETRY TO HER.

One of the Many Cruelties Mrs. Gottsberger Accused Her Husband Of.

Justice Van Wyck, of Brooklyn, yesterday annulled the marriage between Ida C. Gottsberger and Frank R. Gottsberger. Mrs. Gottsberger claimed that her husband was insane when he married her in 1893.

Mrs. Gottsberger says her husband whipped her and forced her to listen to poetry from 9 p. m. to 5 a. m. The defendant smoked cigarettes constantly and put ashes in her victrola. Mrs. Gottsberger alleges that her husband forced her to arise at midnight and go out for a walk. Mrs. Gottsberger also accused him of trying to drown her in Jamaica Bay, of dragging her from a stoop, of throwing a dog at her, and of locking her in a room without food or medicine.

Medical Course Ends Four Years.
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SALE OF CORPSES FROM BELLEVUE.

Alleged Sensational Developments in the Investigation of the Morgue.

Night Visits of Wagons That Carried Away Packages Carefully Concealed.

FORTUNES FROM PALTRY SALARIES.

Commissioners of Charities Reported to Be Prepared to Try Captain White Unless He Resigns—An Old Scandal Freshened Up.

Notwithstanding the secrecy maintained by the Commissioners of Charity in relation to the recent investigation of the management of Bellevue Hospital, the facts have leaked out regarding their line of inquiry.

Among the allegations said to have been investigated is that a wholesale business has been conducted in the sale of bodies to medical colleges and private practitioners.

The investigation has extended over a period of eighteen years, during which time Captain White has been in charge of the Morgue. It included the time when a scandal was created in Bellevue Hospital regarding the purchase of a cadaver by a doctor living in Lexington avenue. This doctor is alleged to have paid \$150 for the body to be used as a specimen for the benefit of two or three students whom he was teaching. A saloon keeper named Walsh, whose place of business was at the corner of Twenty-sixth street and First avenue, was alleged to have been the go between. He was indicted by the Grand Jury, but the case was never brought to trial.

NIGHT VISITS OF WAGONS.

It was testified at the private investigation that John Maloney, the official death messenger, paid \$35 a month rent for his apartments. His salary was \$300 a year. Maloney left the employ of the hospital Friday. It was also testified that the salary of Captain White up to within a year ago, was \$41.68 a month. His assistant received \$20 a month. Considerable importance was attached to the testimony introduced that for many years, at all hours of the night, wagons drew up at the Morgue and carried away mysterious packages, the destination of which is unknown.

Captain White is a Grand Army man, and it will be necessary to prefer formal charges and hold a regular trial in order to justify his removal from office. The Commissioners some time ago announced that they would comply with this provision of the law, and unless Captain White resigns in the meantime, the facts alleged to have been developed at the hearing may be made public.

It is alleged that a large business has been done by certain undertakers with the convenience and assistance of certain Bellevue Hospital officials in the sale of still-born children. These specimens have a commercial value in medical colleges, and in the private laboratories of physicians.

WHITE'S FORTUNE.

It is stated that the methods used to conduct this business were as follows: When it became necessary to examine an undertaker to remove a still-born child it was his duty to take the same to the Morgue. It is alleged, according to some of the witnesses which the Commissioners of Charity have interviewed, that these bodies, after being entered on the records and marked as being assigned to Potter's Field, were taken away by these undertakers and sold at market price, and that the undertakers paid certain Bellevue Hospital officials commissions for allowing it.

Among the facts investigated by the Commissioners was the financial standing of Captain White. The Commissioners learned that he was worth over \$50,000, but there was nothing in their investigation that reflected personally on him. Captain White is known as a very frugal man, and the Commissioners are not inclined to believe that the possession of his wealth, notwithstanding his meagre salary, indicates any wrong-doing on his part.

The practice at Bellevue Hospital has been to send 12 per cent of the unclaimed dead at the Morgue to Bellevue College.

When a man dies in the hospital and is unclaimed and is entered upon the books as unknown, very little sentiment exists in his transmission to the Morgue and subsequent burial. His remains are generally sent to Potter's Field.

DYING FROM A BEATING.

Eight-Year-Old Eddie Hertell Alleges That Allaire Knocked Him Down and Kicked Him.

Eight-year-old Eddie Hertell, who lives with his married sister, Mrs. Little Greis, at No. 32 Thornton street, Williamsburg, is said to be dying from injuries alleged to have been inflicted by Biasius Allaire, a shoe dealer, at No. 714 Broadway. Allaire was arrested on Monday last charged with the assault, and was paroled by Justice Goetting pending examination.

Yesterday afternoon Coroner Nason took the little fellow's ante-mortem statement, in which the boy said that as he was returning to his home he playfully tugged at a pair of shoes which were hanging from a hook in front of Allaire's place. "The shoes fell to the sidewalk, and a son of Allaire's ran from the store and, capturing him, turned him over to his father (Allaire), while he went for a policeman. The boy said that while he was alone in the place with the proprietor the latter knocked him down, and after kicking him into almost insensibility, hurled his head foremost through the plate glass in the door."

REFUSED A \$5,000 FORTUNE.

A Wandering Son Declines His Mother's Legacy.

Bridgeport, Conn., March 21.—Charles Alvord, a resident of this city, to-day refused absolutely to accept a fortune left him by his mother, and went away, leaving no address.

Mrs. J. D. Alvord died on Wednesday. She left only one son, Charles, and six grandchildren. Charles had been a rover for many years, and was said to be imprudent and shiftless. His mother's estate is valued at \$500,000, and half of this she bequeathed to him.

PIERCE'S FAVORITE PRESCRIPTION FOR WEAK WOMEN